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CALIFORNIA MIDWINTER FAIR.

An International Fair is to be held in San Francisco, in the Golden Gate Park, beginning January 1, 1894. The LICK Observatory will make a full exhibit of astronomical pictures and transparencies. It is expected that Harvard College Observatory, the Physical Laboratory of Johns-Hopkins University, etc., will send representative photographs, etc., for exhibition.

We shall be very glad to take charge of the exhibits of Eastern or European observatories which may be consigned to us, and to see that they are suitably displayed. They should be sent to San José, in the care of the LICK Observatory, and they will be forwarded from here along with our own boxes.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

COMPLETION OF THE NEW DUDLEY OBSERVATORY.

On the 7th of this month invitations were issued for the inspection of the new building and equipment of the DUDLEY Observatory at Albany.

The old location of the institution was unfavorable for astronomical work in several particulars, made so in part by the growth and extension of the city. Situated on the northern boundary, all observations in the south, where the greater part of the work is carried on, were made directly across the longest extent of the city. The myriads of chimneys, both factory and dwelling, not only obscured the air with smoke, but produced great waves of warm air, rising during the early night between the telescope and the sky.

The tracks of the New York Central pass the hill on two sides, having four sets of rails, on which there is the heaviest character of traffic. There seems to be a layer of rock, extending from beneath the old observatory to a point of the railroad, not perhaps the nearest to the building, and which communicated the vibrations produced by trains, with great force.

These were especially noticeable when heavy freight trains were coming down the grade, with brakes locked, a sliding rather than rolling motion. A nadir observation was usually impossible at these times. When the same trains were ascending on the way west, besides the pounding of the wheels of three or four locomotives at once, there was the dense volume of smoke, unconsumed as forced under heavy draught from the stacks, rolling often into and through the observing rooms.

The location had been of late years most inconvenient for a permanent home for a family. One of the worst quarters of the city had grown up about the foot of the hill, and had at least to be skirted by any one going to the observatory. No perfectly available road had been constructed to the grounds; there were times when a cart could enter, by a long detour from the center of town, but the trails were rarely long enough in repair to be used for carriages.

For the assistants of the observatory, unhampered by ties which are generally considered to make life attractive, aside from professional duties, and being in vigorous health as a rule, it was not so difficult. The walk of from a mile to a mile and a half to find a boarding house was in some respects even beneficial, though in the deep snows of the severe Albany winter or during heavy rains it was not altogether agreeable. The unsheltered walk up the hill, the last part being made easier by slats nailed to the planking before reaching the steps at the top, was not the place to loiter in the hot summer days. It was best to get over it quickly.

The slats and even the planking used to disappear, in part for the use of the neighbors of the quarter I have spoken of, or, in winter, to make way for coasting for their boys. In this last case it was safer to step aside into the snow rather than stand upon one's dignity, to have it carried away with the remains of one's temper by some swiftly descending cutter.

One's best effort can hardly be given unrestrainedly to astronomical work unless the conditions of living shall be an approach at least to those usually met with. Much that made connection with the observatory pleasant in the old days came from the whole-hearted and interested efforts of the Director and his family. They made the work stimulating to the point of overlooking all trifling hardships in comparison with the inner life of the observatory.

One of General MITCHELL'S sons, in giving an account of his father's life, tells of long evenings spent on the high veranda of the observatory dwelling overlooking the valley of the Hudson and the river and hills beyond; since then others have gathered there and waited for the fading of the long summer twilights.

The observatory building, framed by trees on its summit, was impressive in its quiet and unique isolation, so near a great centre of life.

The new observatory is built in an unimproved portion of the City Park, and has nothing within reach that will interfere with good conditions for observing. The neighborhood will be in the future the residence part of the city, but the observatory will always command the needed isolation. It is accessible by electric tram, within easy walking distance, and has improved equipment, of which mention has already been made in this journal.

The change of site has only been accomplished after long effort, deferred more than once when it seemed as if to be realized. The successful establishment of the new DUDLEY is a gain to the science to which it is dedicated and a just reward to the energy and ability which have made it possible.

R. H. T.

PORTRAIT MEDALLION OF JAMES LICK.

A bronze portrait medallion of JAMES LICK, made by Mr. F. M. WELLS, in 1888, has been sent to the LICK Observatory by the LICK Trustees. It is mounted on the wall of the main vestibule, facing the principal entrance, over a bronze tablet with the inscription:

LICK ASTRONOMICAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

STAR SPECTRA IN WHICH TWO OR MORE OF THE HYDROGEN LINES ARE BRIGHT.

In *Astronomische Nachrichten*, No. 2963, ESPIN called attention to the fact that the $H\beta$ hydrogen line is very bright in ϕ *Persei*. Shortly afterward I examined the spectrum of that star and found $H\alpha$ to be very much brighter than $H\beta$, as it is at present. I supposed the bright $H\alpha$ line was well known, but am unable to find any statement that it has been observed by others.

Professor PICKERING and Mrs. M. FLEMING have announced in various places that the DRAPER Catalogue photographs show the $H\beta$ line to be bright in the stars ψ *Persei*, π *Aquarii*, κ